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The 'New Left' Convenes

So long as the Johnson administration treats the war in Vietnam as a kind of huge police action, it will continue to expose itself to the kind of criticism that could scarcely be tolerated in a declared war. That fact becomes more apparent as a blanket movement of the New Left prepares a program for next year's elections.

Michael J. Wood, field coordinator for the National Conference for New Politics (NCNP), on July 8 said that "Johnson in 1968 is the real issue that will bring 'the movement' together in Chicago and in the campaign." The Chicago reference was to a meeting of some 2,000 peace, civil rights, and new left student organization leaders.

Invitations to the meeting which begins next Tuesday were issued to a widely varied band of organizations on the left side of the political spectrum. The common denominator seems to be distaste for the war in Vietnam. Mr. Wood, former staff member of the National Student Assn., who disclosed the subsidies from the Central Intelligence Agency, said President Johnson "symbolizes the corruption and immorality of the American policy in Vietnam."

Most of those involved in the Chicago conference will be young people, although advance proposals have linked the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., the 38-year-old keynoter, and Dr. Benjamin Spock, the 64-year-old pediatrician, as possible candidates on a third-party ticket in 1968. Dr. King on April 25 said he would not accept a third party nomination, but Dr. Spock on July 17 said that he would run if asked.

Mr. Wood said on July 8 that the "old left" organizations like the com-

munist party would not be invited to Chicago because they had become "too conservative." The New Left seems to have little taste for ideology.

Writing in another context, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover observes: "To equate the New Left with a political party or a tightly disciplined organization is to miss its true identity. It is not an organization. It does not have a constitution, bylaws, or an official membership."

"Rather the New Left is a mood, a philosophy of life, a Weltanschauung, a way of looking at self, country, and the universe."

Co-chairmen of the NCNP are State Rep. Julian Bond of Georgia, twice refused his seat in the Georgia House because of his opposition to the Vietnam war, and Simon Casady, who was ousted as president of the California Democratic Council in 1966 after bitterly criticizing President Johnson.

The New Left has suggested that a third party might run favorite son candidates — like Rep. Adam Clayton Powell Jr., in New York — to attempt to take away key state electoral votes next year from President Johnson. The third-party idea is contemplated also in a 2,400-word memorandum being circulated by Joseph L. Rauh Jr., vice chairman of Americans for Democratic Action.

Among "dump Johnson" proposals by Mr. Rauh are a draft of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy (D-N.Y.) for the presidential nomination and a fight in the Democratic convention for an anti-war platform plank.

Among some Democrats, Vietnam policy is almost as unpopular as it is with the New Left.

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